

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

PUBLIC LIBRARY

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Southeast corner, Fourth and Walnut

CITY, TOWN

Pittsburg

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

No. 5 Joe Skubitz

STATE

Kansas 66762

CODE

20

COUNTY

Crawford

CODE

037

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☒ DISTRICT
☒ BUILDING(S)
☐ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC
☐ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED
☐ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS
☒ YES: RESTRICTED
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO

ACCESSIBLE

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE
☐ COMMERCIAL
☒ EDUCATIONAL
☐ ENTERTAINMENT
☐ GOVERNMENT
☐ INDUSTRIAL
☐ MILITARY
☐ MUSEUM
☐ PARK
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

City of Pittsburg

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall, Fourth and Pine

CITY, TOWN

Pittsburg

VICINITY OF

STATE

Kansas 66762

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Crawford County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Girard

STATE

Kansas

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic Sites Survey

DATE

1970

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Kansas State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Topeka

STATE

Kansas 66612

037-4460-025

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT
☐ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

Interior

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The style of the Pittsburg Public Library has been influenced both by the Art Nouveau Movement and the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright. The building has been constructed of dressed Carthage stone and has a truncated hip roof covered with red tile. The foundations are covered with dressed Carthage stone above the ground line and set out slightly from the walls of the building. The library measures 90 feet long, 60 feet wide, and is 30 feet high. There are two stories and a basement, though the exterior window arrangement makes the building appear to have only one story. The library faces north and is located on a corner lot one block west of the main commercial district in Pittsburg.

The main entrance has been centrally placed on the north facade. It has been accented by a cantilevered metal canopy which is supported by wrought iron brackets and chains which connect to the large, coupled wood brackets supporting the roof. A metal plaque with the words "Public Library" cut in stencil has been attached to the front of the canopy. A wide flight of steps lighted by period fixtures leads up to the main entrance. Entrance is through a single, wood door with a glass panel. To either side of the door, separated by stone mullions are geometrically designed, stained glass sidelights. A fanlight window with a truncated keystone and recessed spandrels which have been incorporated into the frieze between the brackets complete the central bay.

The north facade has been divided into five bays. To either side of the main entrance is a grouping of windows with four lights divided by stone mullions and with a fanlight above the stringcourse. The stringcourse runs along the base of the brackets which support the roof. The windows themselves have been set in stained wood frames. The stone lintels are rounded and are supported by small corbels under each vertical mullion. There is a larger window grouping which is divided by the stone mullions into six lights in the outer bays. Aligned below each of the window groupings are the windows which light the basement. These windows have large shaped lintels.

The east and west facades have similar configurations, each having three bays. The window in the center and the one to the north of it on each facade have six square lights and a fanlight like those on the north facade. The southern windows on these facades do not have fanlights, and the one on the west facade has four lights while that on the east has six lights.

Two wings with a hipped tile roof extend from the south facade of the building. The facade steps back slightly between the two wings and this section of the building has a flat roof. The cornice line has been treated simply with a strip of squared stone molding. There are four strips of windows on this part of the facade. There is a secondary entrance with sidelights at the basement level on the east wing. Above this doorway is a large window with six lights. There is a triple window at the basement level of the west wing. Above this is a small rectangular window and a grouping of four windows. Two wide brick chimneys with stone caps rise above the roofline where the wings intersect with the main building.

PITTSBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Kansas	
COUNTY Crawford	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7.

There have been very few alterations to the major public areas of the Pittsburg Public Library. The entry hall on the first floor remains particularly impressive with its mosaic floor and the ornamental columns which support the arched steel ceiling. The main stairway, which is located in this entryway, is carved oak and is lighted by the stained glass windows in the central bay of the north facade. The stack room, general reading room, study room and librarian's office are located on the first floor. The second floor contains additional stacks and a reading room. The heating plant, janitor's room, unpacking room, newspaper storage room and a meeting room are located in the basement. The children's room which was originally located on the first floor has been moved to the attic, which was converted from storage space to this new function in the early 1970's. Some of the ceilings have been lowered and fluorescent lighting has been installed.

B SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1910-1911

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Normand S. Patton and Grant C. Miller

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Pittsburg Public Library was erected with Carnegie funds in 1910-1911 from plans prepared by the Chicago architectural firm of Normand S. Patton and Grant C. Miller.

The city of Pittsburg was established in 1876. The chief reason for its founding was the extensive coal deposits in the area and the potential for manufacturing activities. For a time it was simply a coal-mining camp, but as the mining and industrial potential of the area materialized, the town began to grow and became one of the largest in southeastern Kansas.

No public library was available in Pittsburg until the closing years of the 1890's. Some of the leading men of the community had formed the Academic Literary Club in 1894. Its purpose was to circulate books for the use of members and for lending to friends. In 1896 the members began to talk of a public library; in 1898 the voters of Pittsburg approved a tax levy for maintaining a library. The mayor appointed a library board, and operations began on a small scale where space was available. In January, 1902, a corner of the City Hall was opened as a library.

In 1907 the library board began planning for a permanent library building. With the support of the Pittsburg Commercial Club, correspondence was begun with Andrew Carnegie concerning assistance for construction. On June 25, 1909, word was received that Carnegie would give \$40,000 to the city when his conditions had been met. Accordingly on July 14 the library board agreed to provide the site, and on the same date the city council voted to provide the annual financial support. On September 13, 1909, the library board approved the purchase of the building site at the corner of Walnut and Fourth for \$7,000.

Immediately the board set in motion steps for securing plans and specifications. In October a circular letter was prepared for sending to a number of architects suggested by board members and to others who inquired, asking them to present sketches and other materials to the board by mail or in person on November 4, 1909. On that date the board heard 30 minute presentations from 17 architects, and it was not until 11:00 p.m. that they made their decision. The firm of Patton and Miller was selected largely because they had made a specialty of erecting Carnegie libraries and other educational buildings. The firm had prepared plans for 68 Carnegie libraries in all parts of the country.

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7.

The library is interesting because it fuses two contemporary stylistic trends into a simple and dignified solution. The exuberance of the Art Nouveau is seen especially in the wrought iron brackets which support the entrance canopy and also in the graphics. The influence of Frank Lloyd Wright shows in the patterning of the stained glass, the wide overhanging eaves and the great care to detail.

8.

A contract with the architectural firm was signed in February, 1910; plans for the building had already been approved. Bids were opened May 26, 1910. All exceeded \$40,000 so all were rejected. Normand S. Patton, who was present, was instructed to modify the plans. On June 13, 1910, the bid of S. S. Geatches for \$37,000 was accepted. A contract was made with Geatches on June 22, calling for completion in ten months. On June 29 the board selected G. J. Munn to be superintendent of the building construction.

The cornerstone laying ceremony was held September 7, 1910, with the local Masonic lodge in charge. The principal address was given by Dr. G. W. Trout of the State Normal College at Pittsburg. Problems in securing materials and other delays hampered construction of the building. As early as December 10, 1910, Superintendent Munn was reporting to the board on the contractor's inability to obtain acceptable stone for the window sills. At their April, 1911 meeting the board took action to notify the contractor's bonding company that he would not have completed the work by the contract expiration date. No explanation could be found in board minutes of any further action taken against the contractor. In meetings during the summer months the board acted on the purchase of a bronze plaque thanking Carnegie for his donation, purchase of steel stacks, hiring a janitor and landscaping.

The library building was opened to the public at 3:00 p.m. on January 1, 1912. A reception line with library board and staff, an orchestra, and floral decorations greeted the hundreds of visitors. The total cost of the library, excluding books, was \$50,385.21.

Most of the citizens of Pittsburg were very proud of their facility, but there were some negative comments. The editor of one of the local papers, the Pittsburg Kansan, expressed opposition to accepting "blood-stained gold" from the man he blamed for the violence, death and starvation resulting from the Homestead strike. Since Pittsburg's economy was at that time to a great extent dependent on coal-mining, smelting and other industries in which unions were active, he may have been reflecting the view of some of the working men of the city.

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8.

The building has continued to be used as the Public Library. It is significant to the community for its 64 years of service. In addition it is one of the best of the Carnegie libraries in Kansas from an architectural viewpoint. It is an early example of modern, Chicago-influenced architecture in the state.

9.

Connelley, William E., editor, History of Kansas and Kansans (Chicago, The American Historical Society, Inc., 1928), v. 3, p. 1358.

"Corner Stone of Library Was Laid Today," Pittsburg Daily Headlight, September 7, 1910.

Pittsburg Daily Headlight, May 26, July 15, August 16, September 16, November 4, 1909;
February 15, April 29, May 9, 1910.

"Pittsburg's Public Library Promoted by a Book Club," Pittsburg Daily Headlight,
May 9, 1926.

"Select the Library Site," Pittsburg Daily Headlight, September 14, 1909. The principal address was made by the principal of the college at Pittsburg. The principal of the college at Pittsburg made the principal address at the laying ceremony.

Vequist, Betty, "The History of Pittsburg, Kansas, Public Library, 1896-1915" of the building. (Unpublished manuscript filed at the Pittsburg Library).

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Ask Carnegie for Library," Pittsburg Daily Headlight, March 24, 1909.

"The Carnegie Library," Pittsburg Kansan, January 20, 1912.

"Chicago Firm Lands Contract," Pittsburg Daily Headlight, November 5, 1909.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY one

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 348905 4141630
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Richard Pankratz, Director, Historic Sites Survey
Cornelia Wyma, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION Kansas State Historical Society

DATE October 12, 1976

STREET & NUMBER 120 West Tenth

TELEPHONE 913-296-3251

CITY OR TOWN Topeka

STATE Kansas 66612

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE X LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Nyle H. Miller

TITLE Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society DATE November 24, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

